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# Employee earnings

Weekly earnings of employees classified by socio-demographic and employment characteristics, such as full-time/part time status, age, education

Reference period August 2020

Released 11/12/2020

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## Key statistics

- Median employee earnings was \$1,150 per week, up \$50 (4.5%) since August 2019.
- Median hourly earnings was \$36/hr, up \$3.50/hr (10.8%) since August 2019.

Prior to August 2020, information on employee earnings was published in [Characteristics of Employment \(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/characteristics-employment-australia/aug-2019\)](/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/characteristics-employment-australia/aug-2019).

From August 2020, statistics from the Characteristics of Employment survey are now published in three topic-based releases - this Employee earnings release, as well as:

- [Working arrangements \(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/working-arrangements/aug-2020\)](/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/working-arrangements/aug-2020)
- [Trade union membership \(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/trade-union-membership/aug-2020\)](/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/trade-union-membership/aug-2020)

Employee earnings, working arrangements and trade union membership data from the Characteristics of employment survey for 2014 to 2020 will be available in [TableBuilder \(https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6333.0.00.001Main+Features1August%202019\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6333.0.00.001Main+Features1August%202019) from 16 December 2020.

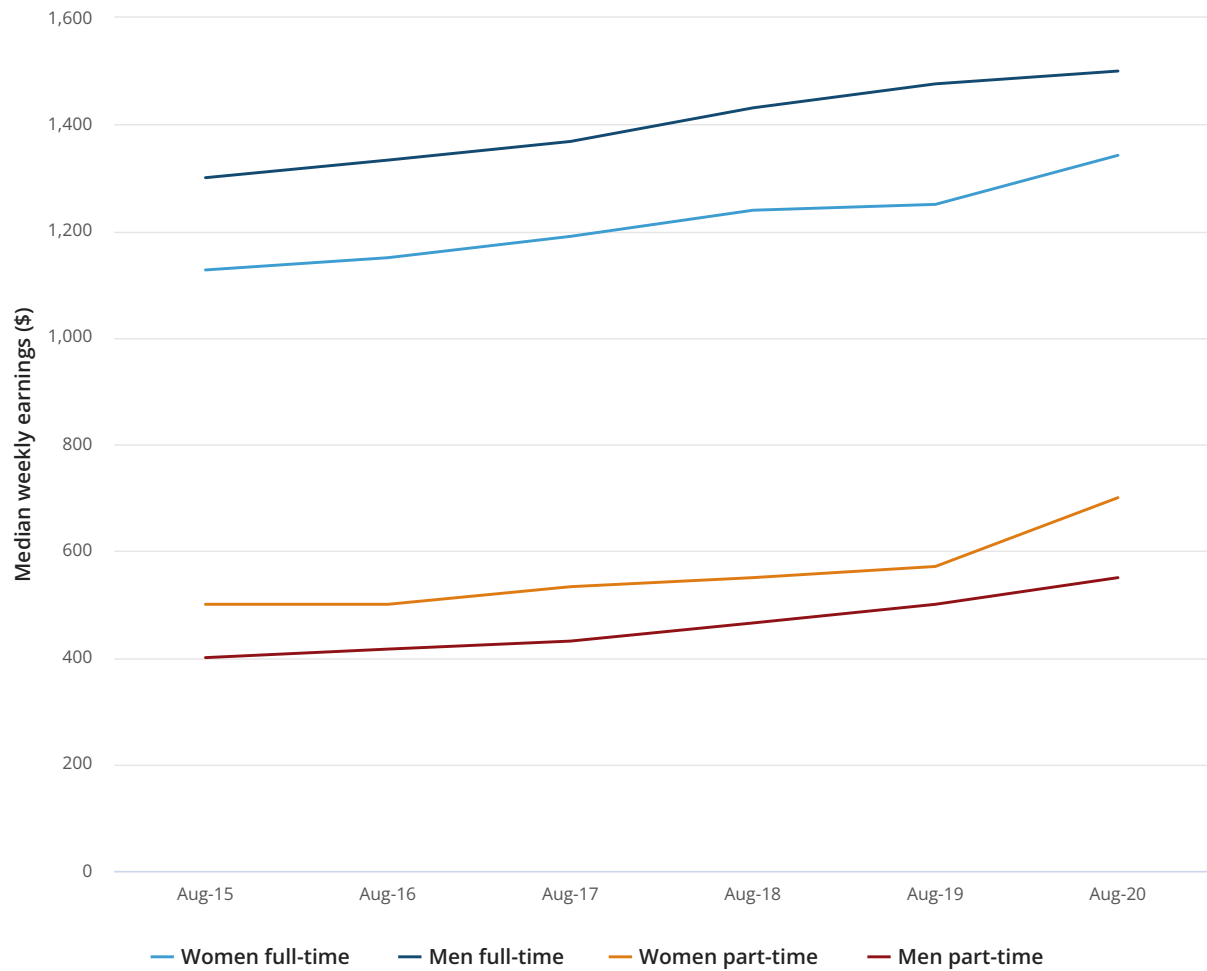
TableBuilder enables the creation of customised tables and graphs.

## Weekly earnings

			2019 to 2020	2015 to 2020
			(% change)	(% change p.a.)
August 2020	August 2019	August 2015		
Men \$1300	\$1280	\$1185	1.6%	1.9%
Women \$1000	\$950	\$850	5.3%	3.3%
Total \$1150	\$1100	\$1000	4.5%	2.8%

In August 2020, median weekly earnings for employees was \$1,150, increasing from \$1,100 in 2019. Median weekly earnings increased at a slower rate for men than women over the past 5 years, in part because the proportion of men working part-time increased.

## Median weekly earnings, by sex and full-time or part-time status



## Hourly earnings

	August 2020	August 2019	August 2015	2019 to 2020 (% change)	2015 to 2020 (% change p.a.)
Men	\$37.20	\$34.20	\$30.30	8.8%	4.2%
Women	\$35.00	\$31.20	\$27.50	12.2%	5.0%
Total	\$36.00	\$32.50	\$28.80	10.8%	4.6%

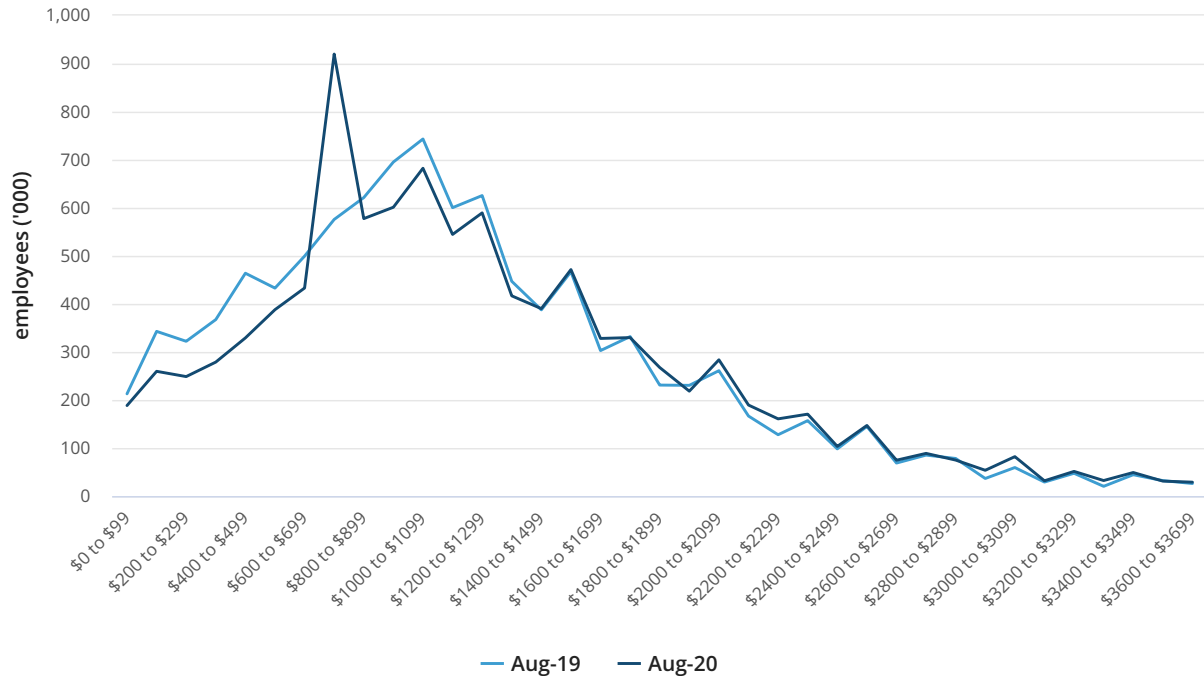
## Distribution of earnings

The lowest weekly earnings quantile grew faster than median in 2020. Earnings for the 10th and 25th percentile increased by 6.3% per annum (p.a.) and 3.4% p.a. respectively, and the 90th percentile by 3.2% p.a., compared to 2.8% p.a. growth in the median over the last 5 years.

	August 2020	August 2019	August 2015	2019 to 2020 (% change)	2015 to 2020 (% change p.a.)
10th Percentile	\$408	\$347	\$300	17.6%	6.3%
25th Percentile	\$750	\$700	\$635	7.1%	3.4%
50th Percentile	\$1,150	\$1,100	\$1,000	4.5%	2.8%
75th Percentile	\$1,740	\$1,657	\$1,500	5.0%	3.0%
90th Percentile	\$2,500	\$2,420	\$2,134	3.3%	3.2%

There were significant changes to the distribution of earnings in August 2020. 920,000 employees were earning between \$700 and \$799 per week, which was higher than the 580,000 earning the same amount in August 2019. Most of this increase was from workers who earned \$750 per week, which are likely to include employees who received the \$1500 per fortnight JobKeeper supplement (before the payments were reduced in September).

## Weekly earnings distribution



### Compositional changes during the COVID-19 period

The COVID-19 period has seen rapid and large-scale change in the composition of the labour market. These changes in the make-up and structure of the labour market need to be considered when analysing the earnings data and the growth observed since August 2019.

Losses in jobs and employment during 2020 were not evenly distributed across the labour market, with most losses observed in casual work, younger age groups and industries with typically lower earnings. Those that remained employed had typically higher earnings or were provided the JobKeeper payment, which has partly contributed to the rise in earnings.

Changes to hours worked and the number of hours paid for have also contributed to changes in the employee earnings data, particularly the derived measure of hourly earnings. In some cases, a reduction in the number of hours paid for has resulted in

an increase hourly earnings.

Refer to [Spotlight - increases in average weekly earnings - compositional changes during the COVID-19 period](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/latest-release#spotlight-increases-in-average-weekly-earnings-compositional-changes-during-the-covid-19-period) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/latest-release#spotlight-increases-in-average-weekly-earnings-compositional-changes-during-the-covid-19-period>) for more information.

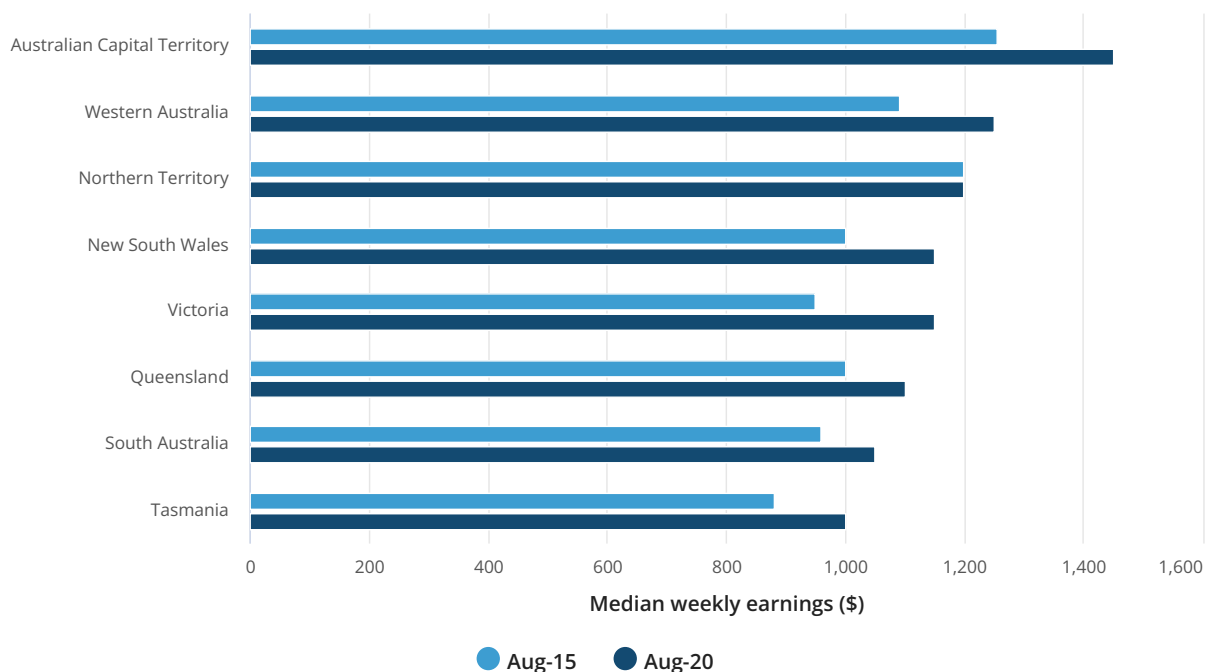
Other labour statistics can provide important insights into these compositional changes, to support the informed use of employee earnings measures during this period. These include:

- [Labour Force, Australia](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release>) and [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release>)
- [Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia/latest-release) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia/latest-release>)
- [Average Weekly Earnings, Australia](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/latest-release) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/latest-release>).

## State and territory

The state or territory with the highest median weekly earnings was the Australian Capital Territory at \$1,450 per week, followed by Western Australia and the Northern Territory whose median earnings were \$1,250 and \$1,200 respectively. The lowest were Tasmania (\$1,000 per week) and South Australia (\$1,050 per week).

## Median weekly earnings, by state and territory



Of the state capital cities, Perth had the highest median weekly earnings at \$1,250 per week, follow by both Sydney and Melbourne at \$1,200 per week.

Outside the capital cities, the highest median weekly earnings was regional Western Australia at \$1,250 per week, and the lowest was regional Tasmania at \$990 per week.

## Occupation

In August 2020, the occupations with highest median weekly earnings were Managers (\$1,765 per week) and Professionals (\$1,540 per week), while the lowest were Community and personal service workers (\$750 per week) and Sales workers (\$675 per week).

Managers (\$50) and Professionals (\$49.9) recorded the highest hourly rate, while Sales workers (\$26.3) and Labourers (\$26.2) were the lowest hourly rate. The gap between the median hourly rates for occupations is smaller than for the weekly measure, partly due to the difference in hours typically worked for each occupation.

## Median hourly earnings, by occupation and skill level



1. Data is coded to ANZSCO ver 1.2. For more information on Occupations and Skill level, refer to [ANZSCO - Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations \(https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/1220.0Chapter32013,%20Version%201.2\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/1220.0Chapter32013,%20Version%201.2)

## Industry

In August 2020, the industries with the highest median weekly earnings were:

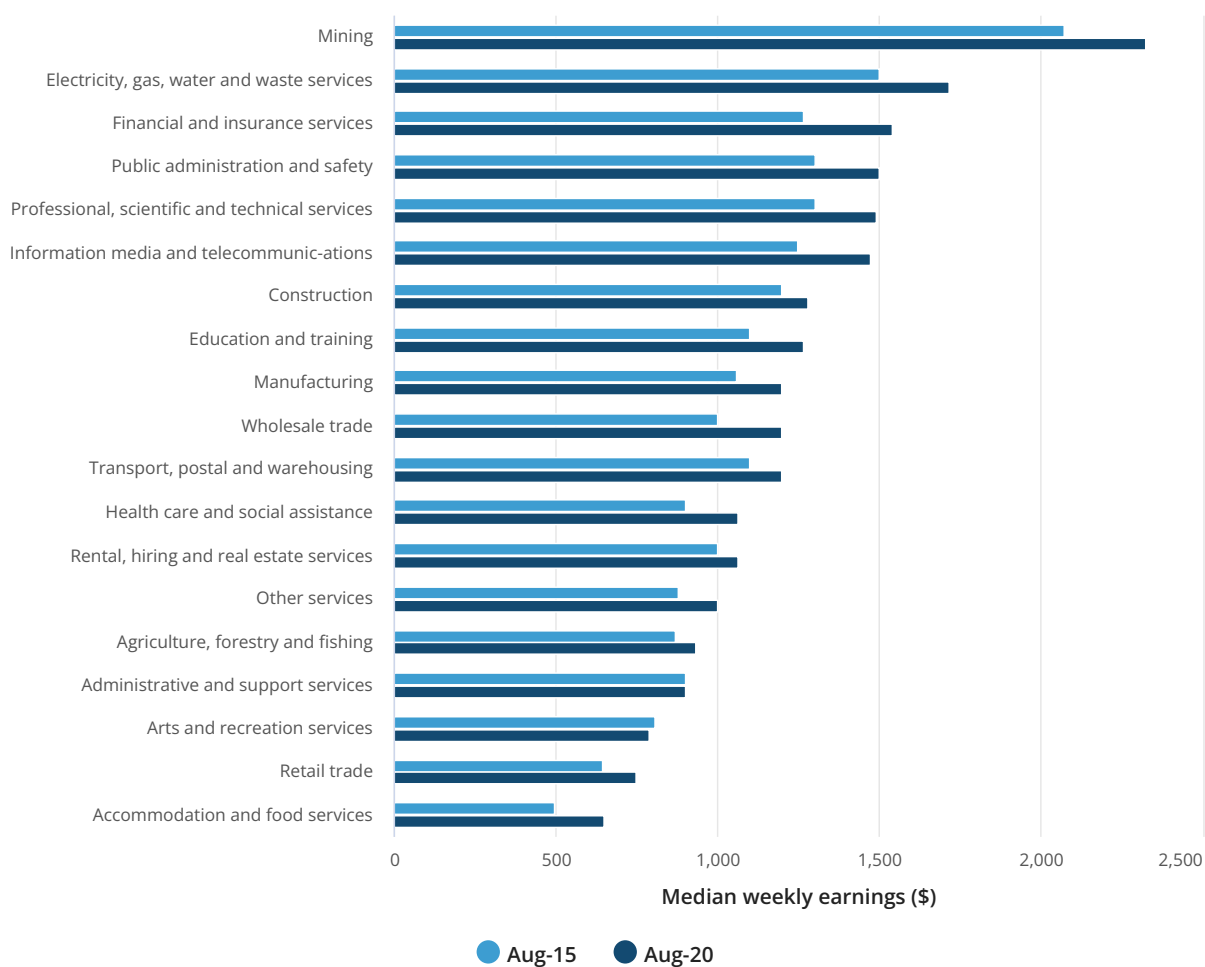
- Mining (\$2,325 per week)
- Electricity, gas, water and waste services (\$1,714 per week)
- Financial and insurance services (\$1,539 per week)
- Public administration and support services (\$1,500 per week).

The industries with the lowest median weekly earnings were:

- Accommodation and food services (\$650 per week)
- Retail trade (\$750 per week)
- Arts and recreation services (\$788 per week).



## Median weekly earnings, by industry



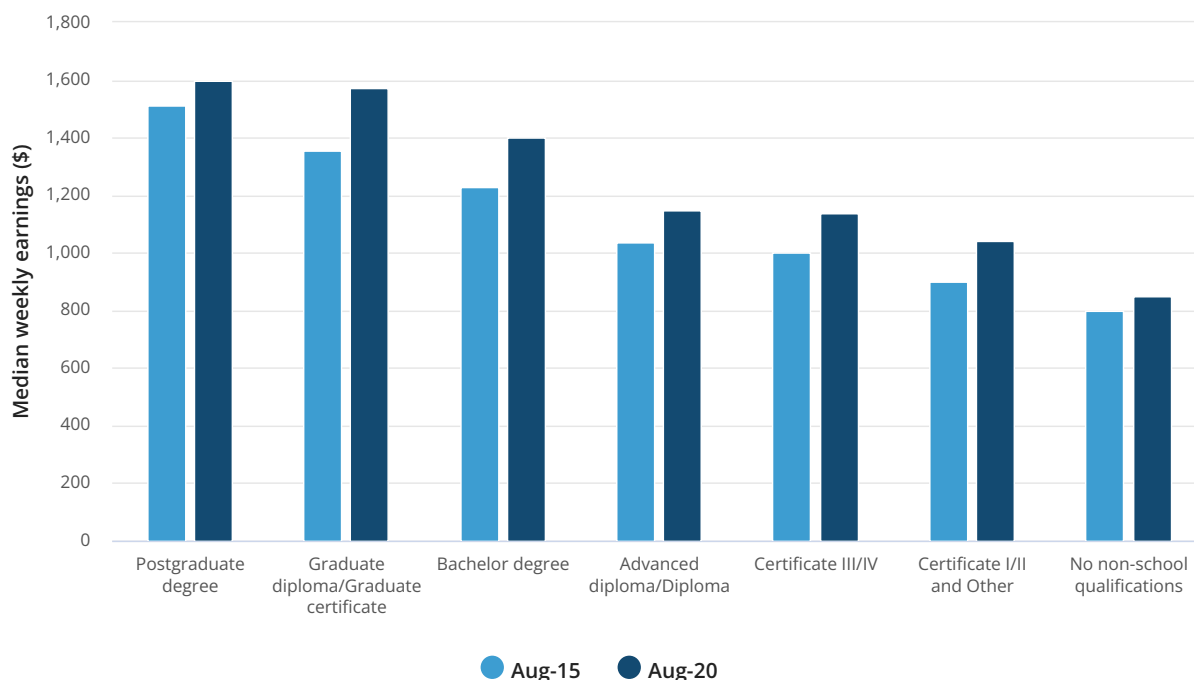
1. For more information on Industries, refer to [Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification \(ANZSIC\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1292.0) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1292.0>).

## Educational qualifications

In August 2020, the highest median weekly earnings were for employees with a postgraduate degree (\$1,600 per week), while the lowest were those without non-school

qualifications (\$850 per week). The largest increases in median weekly earnings, compared to August 2015, were for employees with a graduate diploma/graduate certificate (up \$215 per week and a bachelor degree (up \$170 per week).

## Median weekly earnings, by highest educational qualification



1. For more information on educational attainment, refer to [Australian Standard Classification of Education \(ASCED\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1272.0) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1272.0>).

## Data downloads

Table 1a - Median earnings for employees by sex, state and full-time or part-time, 2004–2020

[Download XLS](#)

[356.5 KB]

Table 1b - Median earnings for Employees by sex, state and status of employment, 2004–2020

[!\[\]\(cead67df4d82d6c83effe4f8699a7d8f\_img.jpg\) Download XLS](#)

[\[352.5 KB\]](#)

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Table 1c - Median earnings for employees by state, full-time or part-time and status of employment, 2004–2020

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[\[308 KB\]](#)

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Table 1d - Median Earnings by full-time or part-time, state and trade union members in main job

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[\[266.5 KB\]](#)

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Table 2 - Median earnings for employees by demographic characteristics and full-time or part-time

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[\[205 KB\]](#)

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Table 3 - Distribution of earnings for employees by industry

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[\[308 KB\]](#)

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Table 4 - Distribution of earnings for employees by occupation and skill level

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[\[185 KB\]](#)

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Table 5 - Distribution of earnings for employees by educational qualification

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Table 6 - Median earnings for employees by industry, occupation and educational qualification

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Table 7 - Median earnings for employees and OMIEs by working arrangements

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Table 8 - Median earnings for employees and OMIEs by demographic characteristics

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[\[279 KB\]](#)

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Table 12 - Median earnings for employees by duration (length) of current trade union membership

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Table 13 - Median earnings for employees by status of labour hire and demographic characteristics

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All 2020 data cubes

[↓ Download ZIP](#)

[839.55 KB]

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Historical data: Table 2 - Median earnings for employees by demographic characteristics and full-time or part-time

[↓ Download ZIP](#)

[313.57 KB]

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Historical data: Table 3 - Distribution of earnings for employees by industry

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Historical data: Table 4 - Distribution of earnings for employees by occupation and skill level

[↓ Download ZIP](#)

[278.88 KB]

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Historical data: Table 5 - Distribution of earnings for employees by educational qualification

[↓ Download ZIP](#)

[251.72 KB]

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Historical data: Table 6 - Median earnings for employees by industry, occupation and educational qualification

[↓ Download ZIP](#)

[298.66 KB]

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Historical data: Table 7 - Median earnings for employees and OMIEs by working arrangements

[↓ Download ZIP](#)

[248 KB]

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Historical data: Table 8 - Median earnings for employees and OMIEs by demographic characteristics

[↓ Download ZIP](#)

[326.8 KB]

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Historical data: Table 12 - Median earnings for employees by duration (length) of current trade union membership

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[114.72 KB]

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## Historical data: Table 13 - Median earnings for employees by status of labour hire and demographic characteristics

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[160.13 KB]

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### Previous catalogue number

- This release uses ABS catalogue number 6337.0\*.
- Data from this release was previously published in [Characteristics of Employment](https://author.absweb.aws.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/characteristics-employment-australia/aug-2019) (<https://author.absweb.aws.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/characteristics-employment-australia/aug-2019>) (catalogue number 6333.0\*\*).

Prior to 2014, distribution of employee earnings data was published in [Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6310.0) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6310.0>) (catalogue number 6310.0).

\*Note: Catalogue number 6337.0 was previously used for [Working Hours Arrangements, Australia \(Preliminary\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6337.0) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6337.0>), Feb to May 1981.

\*\*Note: Catalogue number 6333.0 was previously used for [Working Conditions, Australia \(Preliminary\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6335.0Feb-May%201979?OpenDocument) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6335.0Feb-May%201979?OpenDocument>), Feb to May 1979.

### Methodology

[Characteristics of Employment, Australia methodology, August 2020](#)